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INTERROGATION REPORT OF

HPTM. HERBERT ROEDER

(Head of Gruppe VI, Gen. d. NA, OKH, 1944-45)

The attached report is based on an interrogation carried out by Major Bundy at U.S. 7th Army Interrogation Centre on 29 Aug. 45 and covers i.e. Russian and American Baudot Interception.

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Interrogation Report of Hptm. Herbert ROEDER

(Head of Gruppe VI, Gen. der NA., O.K.H., 1944 - 1945.)

At Seventh Army Interrogation Center
29th August, 1945

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1. Subject.

ROEDER is about 52 yrs. old and was a tester of electrical devices in the Patent Office. He held a Reserve commission and was called to active duty in May, 1942. He was assigned to the OKH. crypt course conducted by Obinsp. KUEHN and on completion of this course was sent in September 1942 to LNA at WINNIZA (in the Ukraine). He was assigned to crypt duties until the end of 1942. In January 1943 he was transferred to the Radio Intercept Abteilung under Reg. Rat ENGELHARDT, and became head of this Abteilung (located at LOETZEN) shortly after when the latter became ill. He remained in this position until the reorganization of October 1944, which created the Gen. der N.A. He emerged from this as Leiter of Gruppe VI, in charge of the intercept of Russian and American Baudot traffic.

It is apparent that ROEDER was given responsibility because of his rank alone and that he was confined almost entirely to administrative duties. He gives an impression of very mediocre ability and force (remihiscent of Major HENTZE) and is quite unable to give a detailed or technical picture of the activities which were theoretically under his command. His acquaintance with cryptographic matters is entirely by hearsay.

2. The LOETZEN Intercept Station.

This station had about 20 - 25 soldiers and 80 women helpers ("Heeresnachrichtenhelferinnen"). It did regular radio intercept and also some work in radio telephone, though the latter proved completely unimportant and was later dropped. Baudot intercept was begun on a very small scale in the summer of 1943, and did not become a major part of the station's work until a year later, when the unit moved to POTSDAM.

The radio traffic intercepted was mainly the top nets, with considerable economic traffic from the big cities, MOSCOW, LENINGRAD, etc. 5Z traffic predominated, with some 5B. R. knew that 5Z was one-time enciphered code. He did not know what the 5B was. Both were sent back to BERLIN and were not solved so far as he knew. R. conferred occasionally with Sdf. BLESCHKE and Ltn. DETTMANN of the crypt section, but had no detailed knowledge of their work other than their admission of inability to solve 5Z or 5B traffic.

3. Gruppe VI, Gen. der N.A.

This was created at POTSDAM by merging the Baudot section of the former LOETZEN station with the similar section for intercept of British and American Baudot, under Insp. HELLER. R. was placed in charge (presumably as senior officer) although he knew very little about the Western problem. The Russian section comprised about 6 soldiers and 30 helpers, with a few attached interpreters (R. did not know of any personnel ever attached from Gruppe IV and did not mention KARRENBERG among the "interpreters"). The American section had 15 soldiers and 30 helpers.

4. Intercept of Russian Baudot.

This was begun in the summer of 1943 with only 3 receivers at first. The number increased gradually, and in the summer of 1944 a new receiver was introduced. The personnel at first were only operators of the equipment, the senior man being Uffz. LAUX. Other operators were: Obgefreiters BREITSCHUH, PUSCHMANN, QUASTEN, SCHMITZ, and STEUER. In the fall of 1944 Wachtmeister HORCH joined the unit, coming from STAATS, where he had been engaged in antenna work at the radio experimental station. HORCH was the senior technical specialist until the end of the war.

The station was located at LOETZEN until the late summer of 1944, when it moved to POTSDAM. It went to STUTTGART in February 1945 and to ROSENHEIM in April. The traffic was not worked on at the station but was sent by courier (delay notwithstanding and lacking any alternative)

R. could give no details of the traffic. 5Z predominated, [to Gr. IV.) with some 5B and a good deal of clear text on economic matters. He recalled no mention of any cipher machine and had no idea of the systems. He could not name the exact Russian stations or designations involved, beyond the general idea that it was the major cities chiefly. The Russian transmitters were powerful, and reception was excellent at LOETZEN, less good at POTSDAM and STUTTGART.

Special equipment was used, made by LORENZ (R. could name no engineers involved), but R. could not give any picture of its construction other than the use of "SCHIEBEN" in some manner to separate the channels.

5. Intercept of American Baudot.

R. was very vague on this subject and kept repeating that his entire connection with this section was administrative. HELLER was in complete charge of the work. R. could name no other.

R. believed the section had been somewhere in Western Germany and then at HALLE before coming to POTSDAM. He thought it had been in operation about a year.

The unit had 10 receiving apparatus. It intercepted mainly teletype traffic known as "FFS". The text was five-letter, and was not solved so far as he knew.

6. Whereabouts of Wanted Personnel.

Gruppe VI was broken up shortly before the end, the girls going home, and the men being sent to Kdr. 5. R. himself went alone to PRIEN on the CHIEMSEE, where he was captured. He last saw HELLER on 1 May. He believes HELLER lives in HANNOVER. He had not seen any members of Gruppe IV in the last days, as they were at BAD REICHENHALL.